

Parks & Environment

Catawba County Board of Commissioners



February 13, 2017



AGENDA

1.



KEY OBJECTIVES

2.



CURRENT STATE

3.



STRATEGIES

4.



MOVING FORWARD



KEY OBJECTIVES





KEY OBJECTIVES

#1

PARK SYNERGY

To create synergy between the three major County parks by developing premier set of activities at each location.

#2

QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENTS

To provide vibrant recreational places to entice young workers and families to live in Catawba County.

To modernize/up-fit each park facility in order to retain and expand our customer base.

#3

REGIONAL & LOCAL MARKETING

To market and promote our parks systematically.



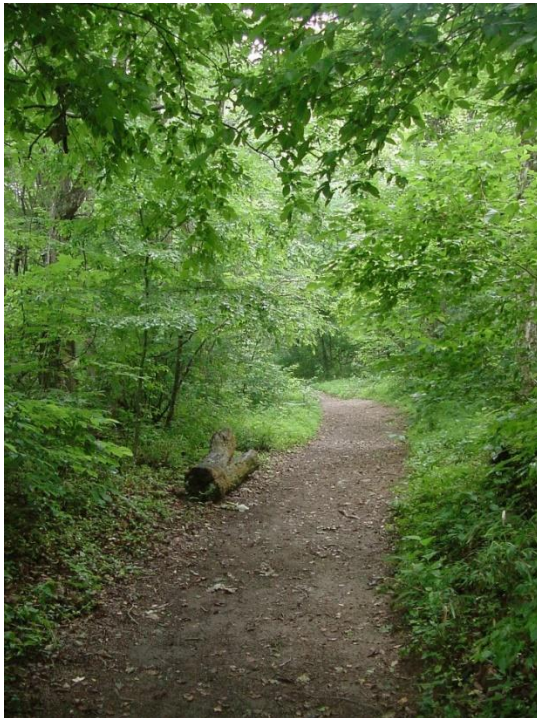
CURRENT STATE





PARKS MISSION

Preserve Catawba County's unique and diverse natural heritage through education and conservation, while providing quality passive recreation and wellness opportunities.





COUNTY PARKS BACKGROUND

Catawba
County Parks
established;
Riverbend Park
built.

First Parks
Master Plan
adopted by
BOC.

Parks Master Plan update to
establish vision for continued
evolution of parks adopted by
BOC.

Greater Hickory
Recreation/Tourism
Plan aimed at
creating regional
destination with
little competition
among counties.

Carolina Thread
Trail Plan
adopted by
BOC.

Duke Energy
FERC Relicensing
Recreation
Management Plan
submitted for
consideration.

Mountain Creek
Master Plan
designed with
public input,
trend data.

1999

2006

2008

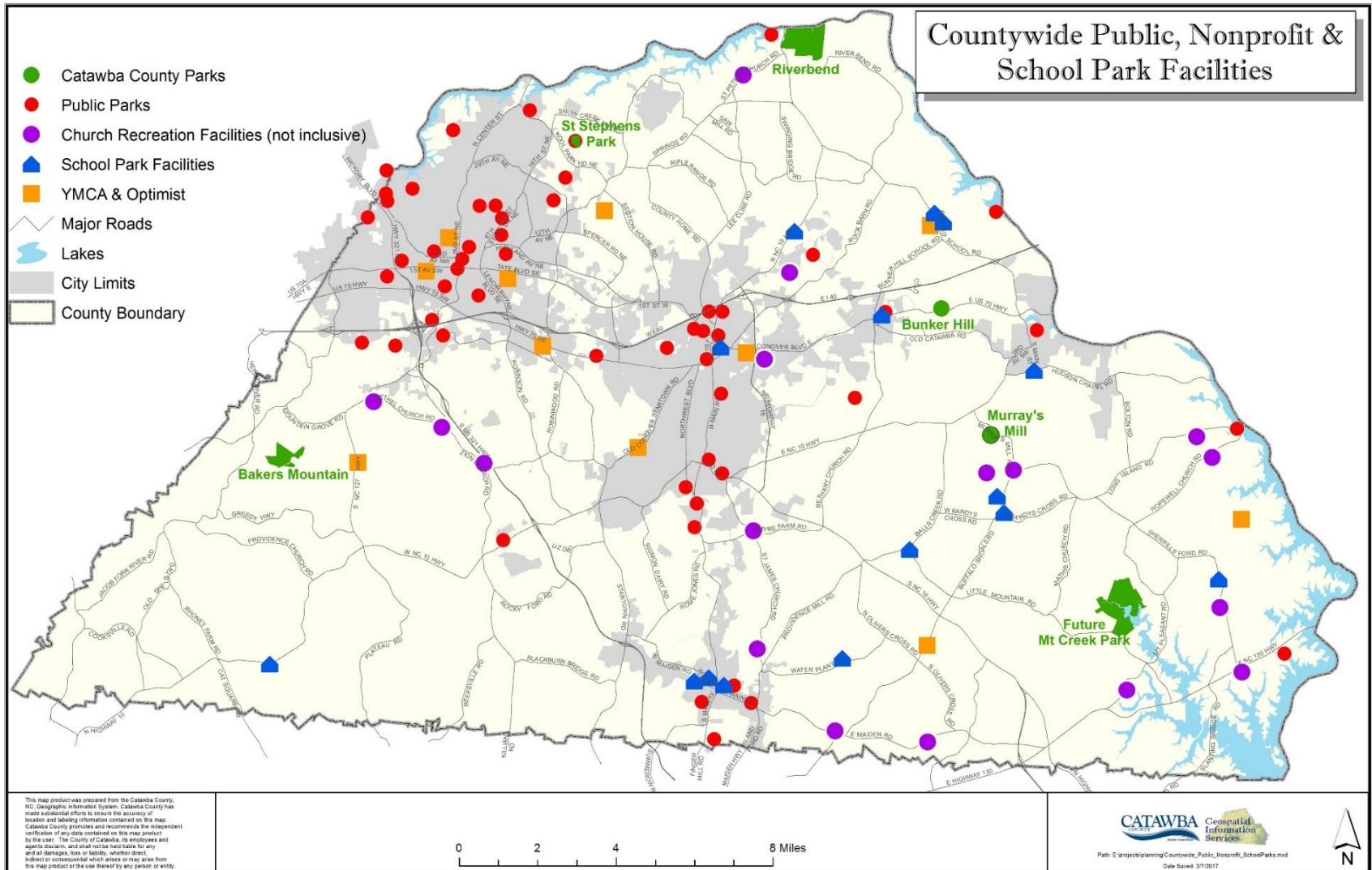
2010

2015

2017

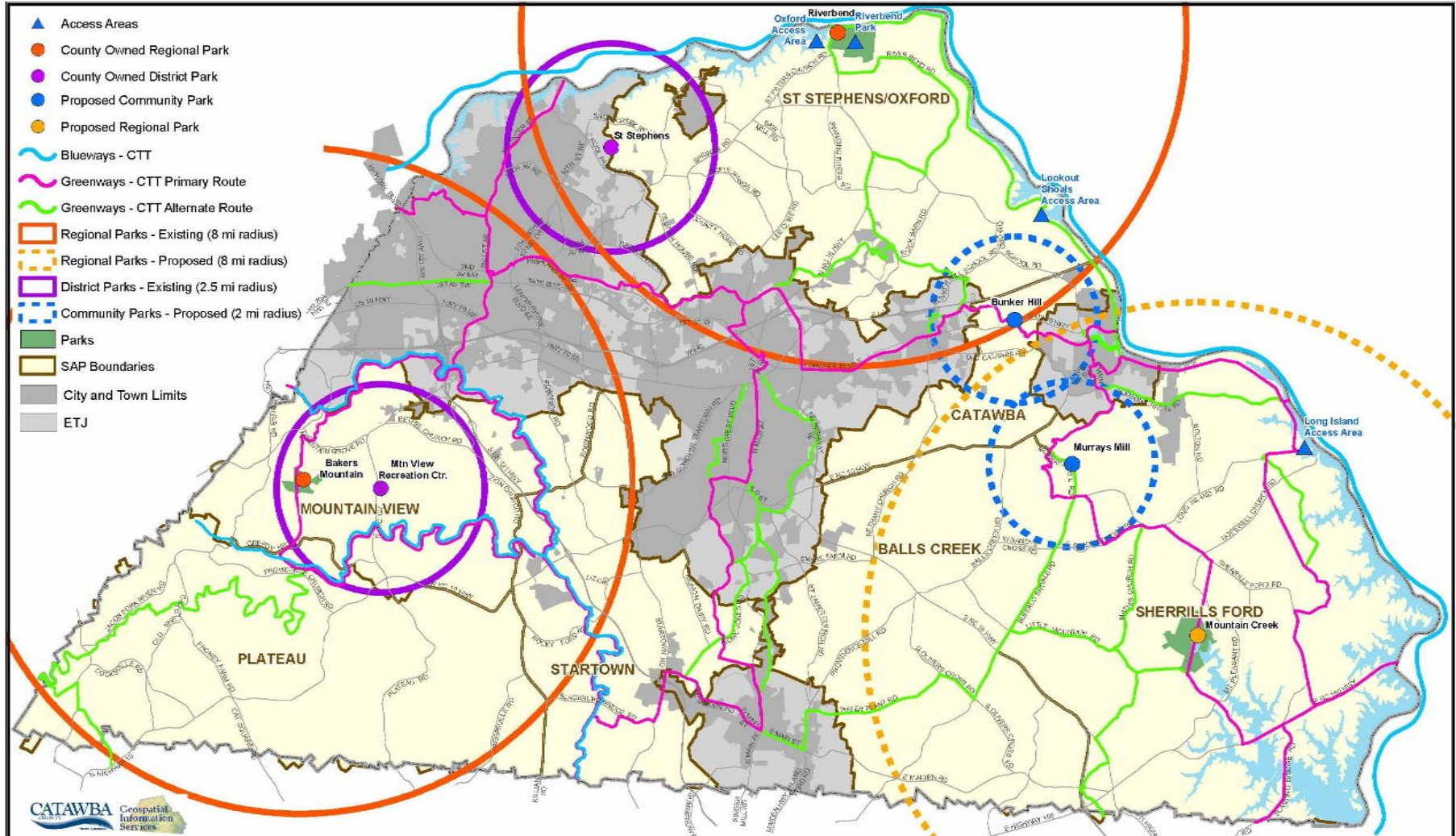


COUNTY ASSET INVENTORY





COUNTY ASSET INVENTORY



CATAWBA
Geospatial
Information
Services

This project was prepared for the Catawba County, NC, Office of Information Systems. Catawba County has made substantial efforts to ensure the accuracy of the data provided. However, the County does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of the data. The County of Catawba is not responsible for any errors or omissions in this map. The County of Catawba is not responsible for any damages or losses resulting from the use of this map. The County of Catawba is not responsible for any claims or liabilities resulting from the use of this map.

Comprehensive Parks
Master Plan 2015

Service Area Proposals
and Recommendations

Map 4

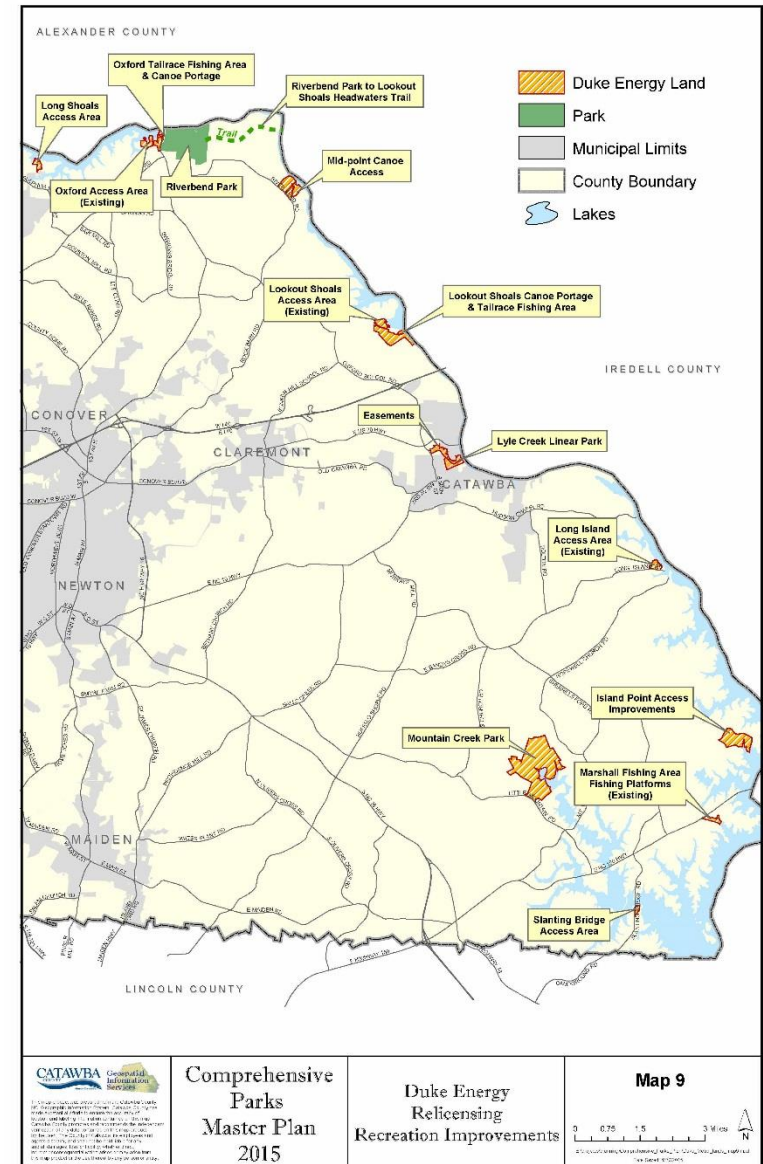
0 1 2 4 Miles
Scale
Map 4
Catawba County, NC
Date: 02/01/15





FERC MANAGEMENT PLAN

- > FERC improvements scheduled over four 5-year periods (20 total years) after license was issued – Nov. 2015.
- > Designed to provide greater public access.
- > Island Point in 3rd period (2026-2030).
- > Future policy decision: Is there a County role in managing and operating public access areas?





COUNTY PARKS GAPS

- > Premier destination features in each park.
- > Interconnectivity linkages within network of trail systems.
- > Upgraded/additional facilities, amenities, and activities.
- > Enhanced operating and capital funding to address gaps.
- > Systematic marketing strategy patterned after those of larger urban areas to increase local and regional visitors.
- > Parking and additional amenities at Bakers Mountain.



FUNDING COMPARISONS

Audited 2012-2013 Per Capita Expenditures by Individual Agency (Operating Funds Only)

Rowan County	\$ 15.53
Alexander County	\$ 13.48
Lincoln County	\$ 13.44
Cabarrus County	\$ 11.90
Union County	\$ 7.57
Iredell County	\$ 7.15
Burke County	\$ 6.37
Gaston County	\$ 4.74
Catawba County	\$ 1.89

- > Significant dedicated and consistent capital funding is key.

Source: NC Recreation Resources 2014-15 MCPRSS,
Executive Report



TOURISM'S ECONOMIC IMPACT

Mountain Creek Study

The annual economic impact of mountain biking is estimated to be \$4M, with the multiplier effect bringing the total to \$5.6M

Parks Master Plan

Parks Conservation Association found that for every \$1 invested, it returns \$4 to the state and local economies

“Business leaders are selecting sites for relocation and expansion of industries and corporations where the quality of life is high and recreation opportunities are abundant.”

Triangle Greenways Council

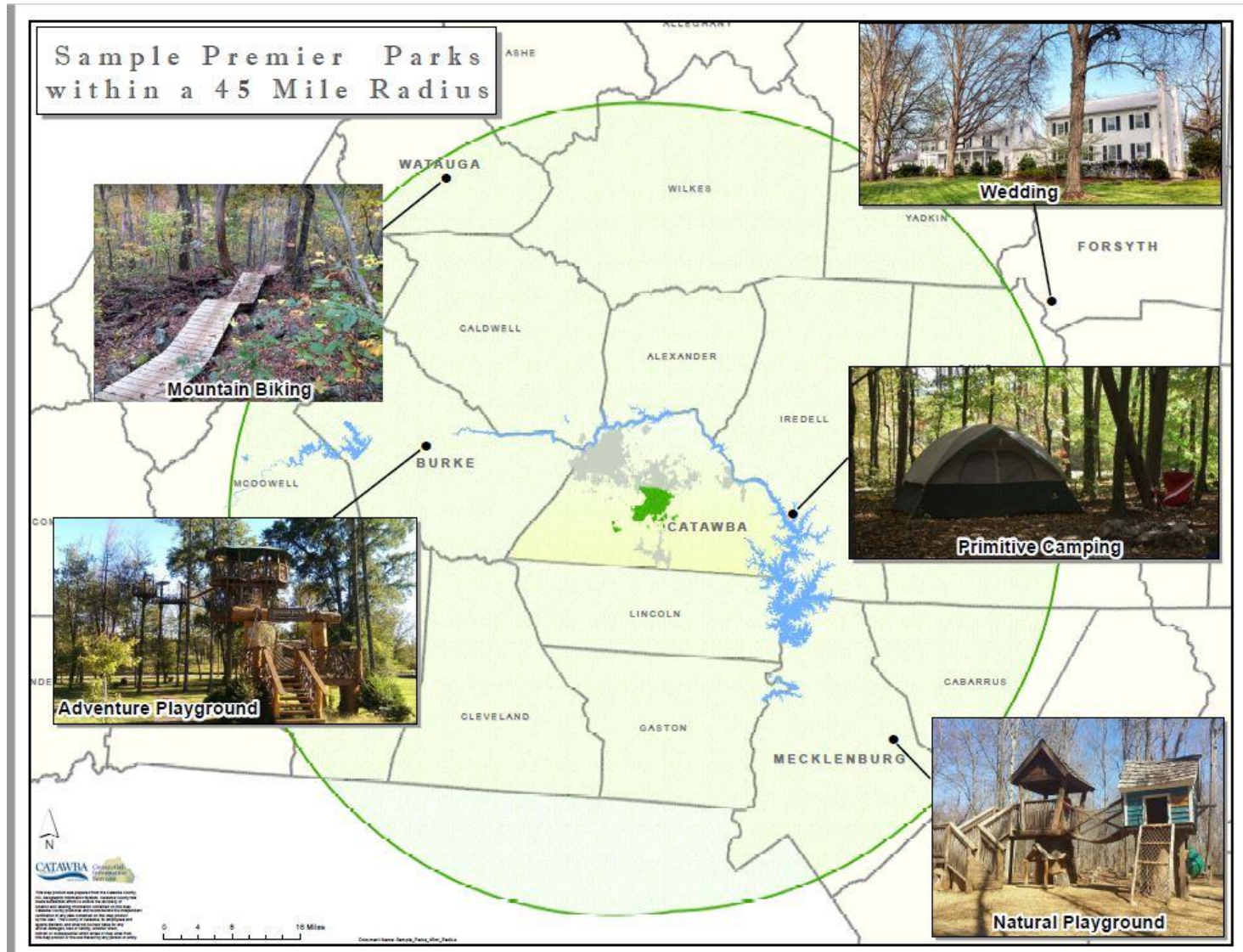
The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of holly leaves and red berries covered in a thick layer of white frost. The leaves are dark green with prominent veins, and the berries are bright red. The frost is unevenly distributed, creating a textured, wintry appearance.

STRATEGIES



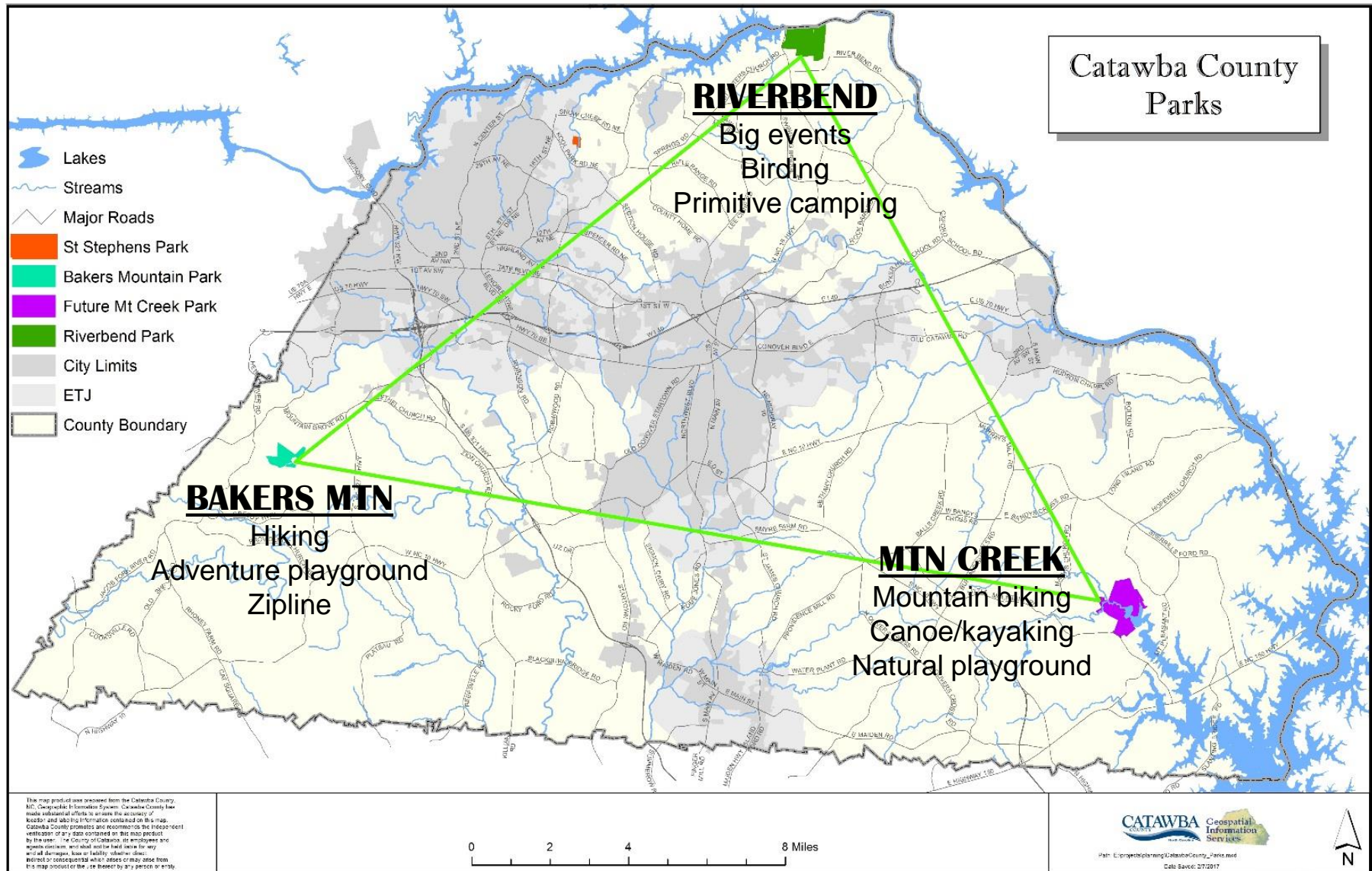


REGION AT-A-GLANCE





SYNERGISTIC PARKS APPROACH

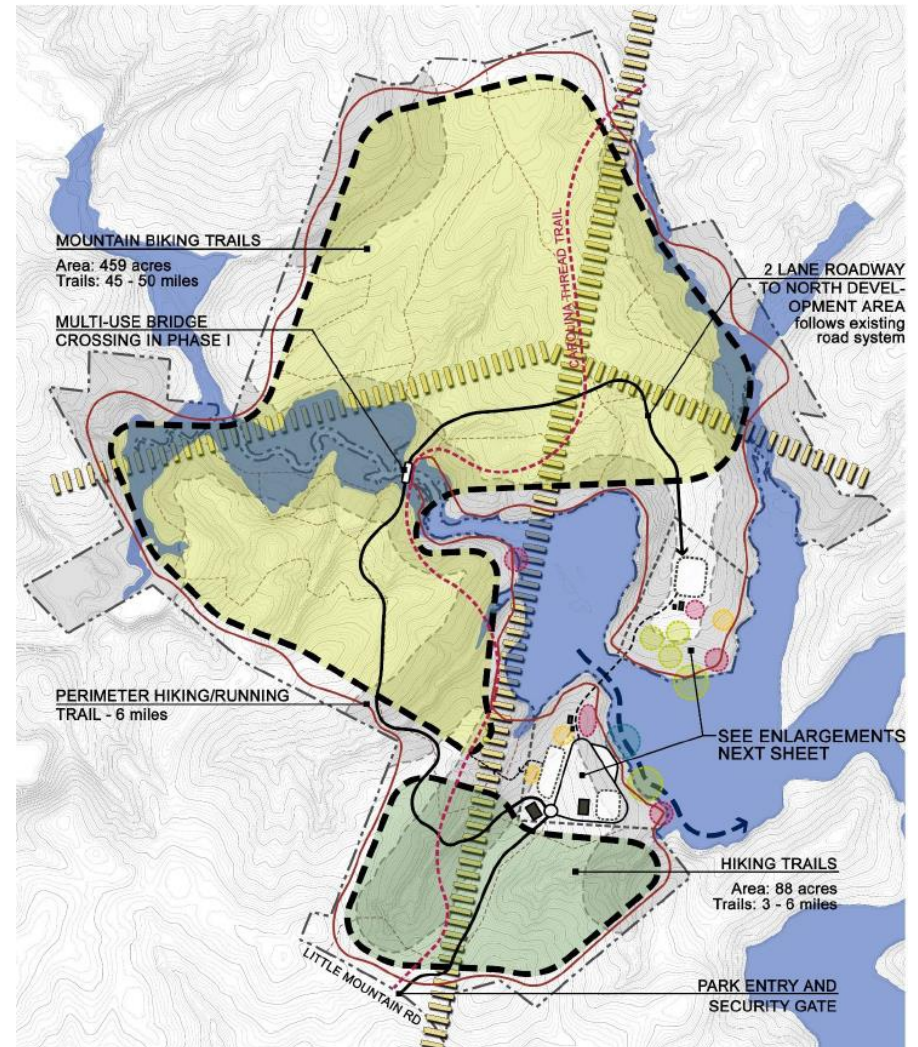




PREMIER AMENITIES: MTN CREEK

Features May Include:

1. Mountain Biking
2. Canoe/Kayaking
3. Natural Playground





PREMIER AMENITIES: MTN CREEK

Mountain Biking

Regional Competition:

Rocky Knob Park, Boone and Lake Norman State Park, Troutman

Target Population:

People of all ages, bike clubs. National, state and regional competitive events.



Canoeing and Kayaking

Regional Competition:

Lake James State Park, Nebo and Goat Island Park, Cramerton

Target Population:

Youth to older adults.





PREMIER AMENITIES: MTN CREEK

Natural Playground

Regional Competition:

Catawba Meadows Park, Morganton; Reedy Creek Park, Mecklenburg Co; and Rocky Knob Park, Boone.

Target Population:

Families with small children and young adults.

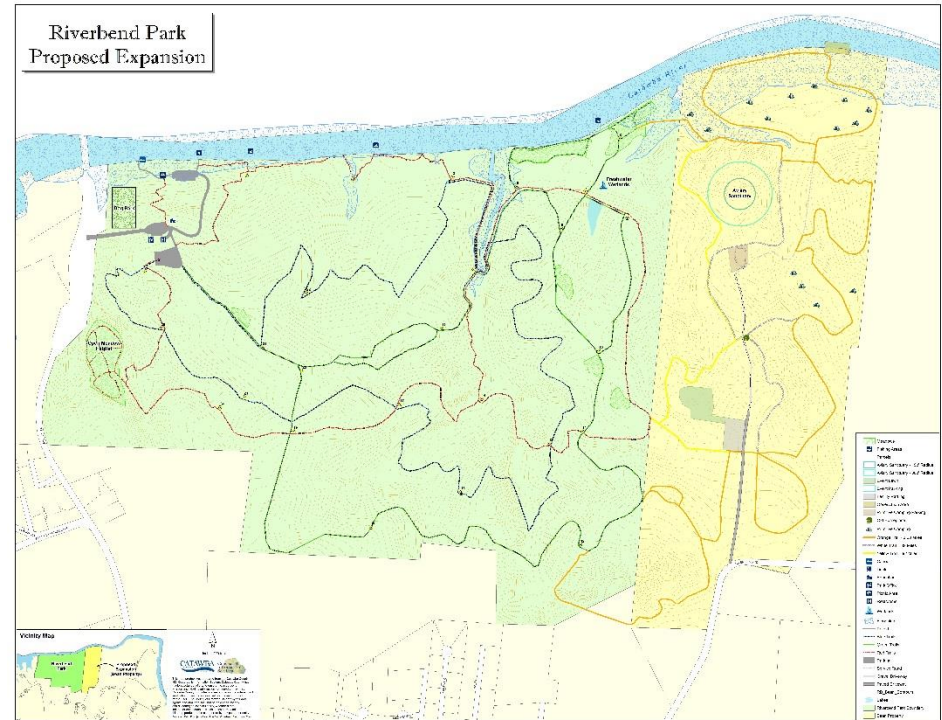




PREMIER AMENITIES: RIVERBEND

Features May Include:

1. Big Events
2. Birding
3. Primitive camping





PREMIER AMENITIES: RIVERBEND

Big Events

Regional Competition:

Tanglewood Manor House, Forsyth Co; Lake Pointe Hall and Pagoda, Mecklenburg Co; Rockyfest, Alexander, Co.

Target Population:

Visitors for weddings, concerts, athletic events, festivals, etc.





PREMIER AMENITIES: RIVERBEND

Birding

Regional Competition:

Carolina Birding Trail has locations throughout the state.

Target Population:

Visitors to bird-banding events, birders, and school groups.



Primitive Camping

Regional Competition:

South Mountain State Park and Crowders Mountain State Park.

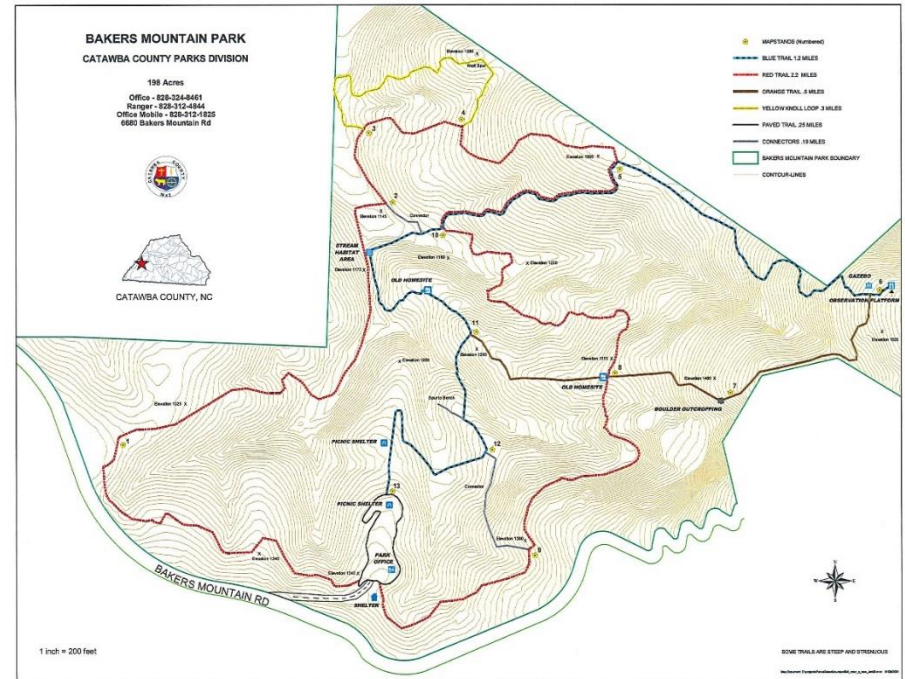
Target Population:

Visitors of all ages from outside the region.





1. Hiking
2. Adventure playground
3. Zipline





PREMIER AMENITIES: BAKERS MTN

Hiking

Regional Competition:

National Parks: Blue Ridge Pkwy, Kings Mtn.

National Forests: Pisgah, Uwharrie.

State Parks: Lake Norman, Lake James,
Crowders Mtn, South Mtns.

Target Population:

Visitors from outside the region, outdoor education groups, and community organizations.





PREMIER AMENITIES: BAKERS MTN

Adventure Playground

Regional Competition:

Catawba Meadows Park, Morganton, and Outdoor Equipment Center, Iredell Co.

Target Population:

Outdoor education groups, school groups, families, and community organizations.



Zipline

Regional Competition:

Screaming Ziplines, Boone; Sky Valley Zip Tours, Blowing Rock; and The Gorge, Asheville.

Target Population:

Regional visitors, youth to older adults, and families.



A monarch butterfly with orange and black wings is perched on a cluster of small purple flowers. A large, bright yellow geometric shape, composed of three nested chevrons pointing right, is overlaid on the right side of the image. The text "MOVING FORWARD" is centered within this yellow shape in white, uppercase letters.

MOVING
FORWARD





KEY QUESTIONS

#1

ACTIVE USES

As we move toward more active parks, what specific activities should the County offer?

#2

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

What type of public-private partnerships is BOC open to exploring? (ex. Concessions, rentals, event operation, sponsorships or naming, etc.)

Does the County have a role in managing and operating FERC Relicensing public access areas?

#3

NON-PROFIT/EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

Is the BOC interested in having the County develop more formalized partnerships with non-profits and schools to offer more recreational options?



KEY QUESTIONS

#4

MARKETING AND EVENTS

- How does the County make its parks more appealing to attract more visitors?
- What kinds of events should be held in County parks?

#5

FUNDING PARKS

- How do we pay for additional park facilities, amenities, and associated staffing?



MOVING FORWARD

1. Build out Mountain Creek and expanded Riverbend Parks.
2. Consider adequate funding to compete and draw private partnerships.
3. Formulate partnerships with YMCA, Optimist, and school system to expand active recreational activities and sharing facilities.
4. Private Partnerships: Research and propose a policy on private involvement in park funding, integrating BOC feedback



MOVING FORWARD

5. Design and Build Premier Mountain Bike Trail System at Mountain Creek: hire professional mountain bike design / build firm in concert with Gary Wirth's existing contract or at its conclusion.
6. Develop strategic marketing plan specific to parks.

A photograph of a forest with a misty atmosphere. Tall, thin trees are visible in the background, and the ground is covered with fallen leaves and low-lying vegetation. A bright yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the image, containing the word "Questions?".

Questions?